



Juvenile Justice Commission

Update

Vol. 3 Issue 1

Message from the Executive Director



Howard L. Beyer

As you all know, a primary responsibility of the Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) is the care of youth placed in our custody by the Family Court. What many of you may not know is the extent to which the JJC serves not only juveniles in our direct custody, but also youth, families, and communities throughout the State.

The Office of Local Programs and Services was established in 2000 with the primary aim of assisting communities and counties in their efforts to provide community-based services to New Jersey's youth. Whether it is the expertise of the Court Liaisons and Detention Monitors, or the assistance provided to counties to implement programs for juveniles who do not require the level of supervision the JJC

provides, the Office of Local Programs and Services is there for our partners in the community.

I want to recognize the efforts of Lisa Macaluso, Director of the Office of Local Programs and Services, for her skills in balancing the needs of our diverse communities, and for building strong relationships with the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and De-

continued on next page

Howard L. Beyer

Executive Director

Thomas Flanagan

Deputy Executive Director

Directors:

- Jack Amberg, Office of Education
- Wimson Crespo, Office of Investigations
- William Curry, Office of Juvenile Parole and Transitional Services
- Rosanne Fairbanks, Office of Administration
- Lisa Macaluso, Office of Local Programs and Services
- Brigitte Mitchell-Morton, Office of Operations

Recent Initiatives and Events

Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)

The State of New Jersey has been selected as a replication site for the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) by The Annie E. Casey Foundation, a national charitable organization that works to build better futures for disadvantaged children, and the Coalition for Juvenile Justice. The objectives of JDAI are to reduce the number of children unnecessarily or inappropriately detained; to minimize the number of youth who fail to appear in court or reoffend pending adjudication; to redirect public funds toward successful reform strategies; and to improve conditions of confinement. This well-documented system reform project has demonstrated in

multiple jurisdictions how to safely reduce reliance on secure detention for juveniles.

This critical statewide issue was recently addressed by Governor McGreevey. He said, *"As Governor, I have prioritized children's issues to fundamentally improve the safety and care of NJ's children. Tough problems like overcrowding and overrepresentation of minority children in detention, and children in the custody of DYFS awaiting placement in detention, will not be ignored. I am very pleased with Howard Beyer's leadership at the Juvenile Justice Commission, including his work in bringing the Annie E. Casey Foundation to expand its presence here in NJ by bringing successful detention reform strategies to bear. We all recognize that child welfare reform will not succeed without looking at the juvenile justice, DYFS, and children's mental health systems."*



Governor James E. McGreevey

The JJC will receive a \$200,000 grant award, technical assistance on various detention reform strategies, and opportunities to participate with, and learn from, colleagues from other jurisdictions. The JJC's formal participation began on January 1,

continued on next page

Realizing Potential & Changing Futures

Message from the Executive Director *continued from page one*

linquency Prevention (OJJDP), the County Youth Services Commissions, and other organizations throughout the State dedicated to helping youth. Lisa and her staff work tirelessly to ensure that juveniles in New Jersey receive the services they need, and that each local facility where youth may be held in custody, whether a municipal police department or a county detention center, meets required safety regulations. The services provided by the JJC's Office of Local Programs and Services touch many lives, often turning juveniles around before they ever reach the doors of the JJC.

Recently the JJC celebrated an important milestone. The JJC's first promotional ceremony allowed us to join as a family to recognize our correction officers, parole officers and investigators who received promotions during the last year. The JJC was privileged to have Attorney General Peter C. Harvey, who represented the Department of Law and Public Safety and Office of Governor McGreevey, join us to administer the Oath of Office to our law enforcement officers. I want to thank everyone who made the ceremony a success, and once again congratulate our staff, whose dedication and expertise was recognized through promotions. ♦

Hold the Date!

**The New Jersey Juvenile
Justice Commission
and the
New Jersey Juvenile
Detention Association**

**A N N U A L
C O N F E R E N C E**

September 22 – 24, 2004

Trump Marina, Atlantic City, New Jersey

Recent Initiatives and Events *continued from page one*

2004. The project will be piloted at several county sites. The JJC will coordinate the efforts of multiple stakeholders at the state and local level.

Racial / Ethnic Disparities

In 2003 New Jersey was selected to host the annual Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) Conference, which was held in Jersey City on August 20 – 23, 2003. This was the largest CJJ conference ever, with approximately 350 attendees present from around the country. The conference theme was "Disproportionate Minority Contact Ten Years Later – Progress Made, Progress Needed." The conference took a look at the history of disproportionate minority confinement, and the ongoing work that has led to the now broader issue of disproportionate minority contact. The JJC has


partnered with the Chief Justice of the State's Supreme Court, the Administrative Office of the Courts, the Attorney General's Office, and the New Jersey Association of County Youth Services Commissions to conduct an inquiry into disparate outcomes for minority youth in the juvenile justice system.

The issue of disproportionate minority contact with the juvenile justice system can only be addressed through a concerted effort among key leaders and stakeholders at both the state and local level. To this end, in April 2003, a joint project was commissioned by Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz, Attorney General Peter C. Harvey, and JJC Executive Director Howard L. Beyer asking County Youth Services Commissions to conduct an inquiry of possible racial/ethnic disparities in juvenile justice outcomes. All 21 counties and a state-level steering committee, made up of representatives of the

Administrative Office of the Courts, the Attorney General's Office, the Public Defender's Office and the Juvenile Justice Commission, are joining in a focused effort to identify the causes of potential disparities where they exist, and to address related issues through local and state level action.

Improving Local Level Planning

Counties are required to plan for the use of funds administered by the JJC's Office of Local Programs and Services. Each county's Comprehensive Youth Services Plan addresses programs and services at each point along the local juvenile justice continuum including prevention, diversion, detention, disposition, and aftercare. During the past year JJC staff has worked with a statewide Coordination of Funding Working Group to develop an enhanced, data-driven planning process. The new planning protocol walks counties through the process of collecting data on the characteristics of youth in their county, and on the programs that exist in their local juvenile justice system, and of analyzing the data, comparing whether the existing programs are compatible with the needs of the youth population. It then guides counties in using the results of the analysis to identify gaps in their local continuum of services. The JJC is currently working to develop and implement a web-based information system to assist in maintaining and reporting all of the data involved in the planning process. ♦




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Update

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Peter C. Harvey, Attorney General
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Office of Local Programs and Services

Based on the belief that building statewide partnerships among organizations involved with youth is a sound strategy, the Office of Local Programs and Services was created to improve coordination and strengthen relationships between local youth-serving entities and the JJC. The JJC believes that local communities offer the best opportunity to plan for, implement, monitor, and evaluate programs and services in each jurisdiction.

In order to strengthen statewide partnerships, Office of Local Programs and Services staff work with juvenile justice professionals at the county level, as well as all operational divisions of the JJC, to administer and coordinate grant funding that helps create innovative programs. In addition to administering funding to support community-based youth programs, the Office also provides direct assistance with program development and implementation, conducts program monitoring and evaluation, and works to ensure the programs exist for most appropriate placement of youth.

Office of Local Programs and Service Units

The Office consists of eight units that strive to keep the lines of communication open, and to support policies and programs aimed at improving the lives of kids.

Program Development and Prevention Services

The Program Development and Prevention Services Unit manages three federal OJJDP grants, including the Title V Delinquency Prevention Grants, Title IIB Formula Grants, and Title IIE Challenge Grants. Most of these funds, which total approximately \$2.6 million, are distributed to communities through Requests for Proposals based on needs identified in the State's Comprehensive Plan for Youth Services.

The Unit also supports statewide efforts



Lisa Macaluso, Director

to reduce disproportionate minority contact in the juvenile justice system, and to provide gender appropriate services for girls entering the juvenile justice system.

■ Blueprints for Violence Prevention

Under Formula Grants the Unit funds programs that replicate those identified as national models by "Blueprints for Violence Prevention." In 2003, the Unit awarded over \$1 million for replication programs such as Bullying Prevention,

Nurse Family Partnership, and I Can Problem Solve.

■ Summer Expansion Program

Also under Formula Grants, in 2003 the Unit was once again able to fund the "Summer Expansion Program," awarding over \$300,000 to local communities for the creation or expansion of 23 summer programs serving at-risk and court-involved youth.

This program provides youth with exciting opportunities and work experiences ranging from working at a minor league baseball stadium or a Jersey Fresh farmstand to growing plants through hydroponics.

■ Preliminary Prevention Programs

Through the Title V Delinquency Prevention Grants, the Unit funds programs designed to prevent involvement with the juvenile justice system. Such primary delinquency prevention programs focus on factors that put youth at risk, as well as those that protect youth from involvement in delinquent behavior. Presently, the Unit funds community-based coalitions in Wildwood, Edison Township, and Franklin

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Salem County School to Careers Summer Expansion Program, Pennsville School District. Students work on a hydroponics project.



Office of Local Programs and Services

continued from previous page

Township. The Bridges Program, led by the Edison Department of Health and Human Resources, is an after school project that promotes healthy lifestyles. It serves adolescents at Edison's two public high schools, as well as their parents.

The State Incentive Program

The State Incentive Program (SIP) provides counties with funds to develop dispositional options for youth who, if not for these programs, would be placed with the JJC. The goal is to expand the array of dispositional options available to the Family Court for this distinct target population. The SIP Unit manages the administration of these funds, oversees the implementation of individual programs, provides technical assistance as needed, and monitors program quality.

There are two types of SIP funding – program services and individual offender funding (IOF). Program services funds have supported the creation and implementation of residential and/or day programs in six counties. Importantly, each of these programs has a distinct aftercare component.

While program services funds support the development of entire dispositional programs, individual offender funding supports the development of a disposition for a specific juvenile. Available to all 21 counties, IOF helps judges craft individualized dispositions by allowing for the purchase of services that specifically address the needs and circumstances of a given youth.

An example of the creative use of IOF occurred in Mercer County, where, as part of his disposition, one youth was enrolled in a boxing club, and then went on to win the New Jersey National Welter Weight Title.



"If you empower those that you manage, they will empower you as a manager."

Frank Hill

The JJC would like to take an opportunity to recognize the dedication of Frank Hill, Court Liaisons Manager. Frank retired on August 29, 2003. Frank served the JJC in various roles over the years – from youth worker to superintendent – and served children throughout his 23-year career. Frank's work philosophy is: "If you empower those that you manage, they will empower you as a manager." Over the years Frank has managed to make us all smile and laugh, and for that we thank him. The JJC wishes him well as he begins a new chapter of his life.

State/Community Partnership Grant Program

The State/Community Partnership Grant Program (Partnership) includes Family Court Services funds and State/Community Partnership funds. It provides funding to County Youth Services Commissions (CYSCs) for establishing and supporting community-based programs and services that support youth along the entire juvenile justice continuum, from prevention through aftercare. JJC staff collaborate with the CYSCs in identifying, planning, implementing, and monitoring these local programs and services.

Currently, the Partnership funds approximately 300 programs throughout the State, including a delinquency prevention program for at-risk youth in Morris County that offers a professional storyteller to special needs groups. The goal of the program is to improve literacy skills, including proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension. In addition, the students learn to make the connection between these stories and the issues and problems they face in their daily lives.

Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant Program (JAIBG)

The JAIBG Unit manages approximately \$4 million in federal JAIBG funds, the bulk of which is awarded to county and municipal Juvenile Crime Enforcement Coalitions (JCECs) for the establishment of programs and services that help hold youth increasingly accountable for their delinquent behavior. JCECs can fund programs in any of 12 identified purpose areas, which include hiring prosecutors, creating juvenile drug courts, and providing pre-trial services for juveniles, among others.

■ Elizabeth Cooperative Accountability Team

The Elizabeth Police Department uses JAIBG funds to support the Elizabeth Cooperative Accountability Team (ECAT), which fosters collaboration between the Elizabeth Police Department, the Union County Probation Department, the JJC Office of Parole & Transitional Services, and Union County's Youth Services Bureau Home Detention Program. This collaboration promotes a more timely response to warrants issued by the Family Court, and

increases information sharing among agencies regarding juveniles in the county. As an example of the cooperative nature of ECAT, during the first three months of the program the Elizabeth Police Department assisted JJC Parole with 84 curfew checks.

■ Operation Hook Up and PACT

JAIBG also funds several state level initiatives at the JJC, including Operation Hook Up and PACT (Parents and Adolescents Changing Together). Operation Hook Up provides aftercare support services to youth at the Life Skills and Leadership Academy (LS&LA), strengthening linkages between the youth, their family, and the community. Services begin prior to a youth's release from LS&LA, and include employment counseling, family counseling, academic assistance, and providing family members with transportation to the LS&LA. PACT provides 16 weeks of family education and support services to residents at Essex and Camden Residential Community Homes, and strives to strengthen the life and leadership skills of residents and their families.

Court Liaisons

Court Liaisons serve as a bridge between each county's local juvenile justice system and the JJC. The Court Liaisons are responsible for ensuring that youth facing disposition by the Family Court are placed appropriately within both the local juvenile justice continuum, and within the JJC. Court Liaisons interview each youth referred to them and then make recommendations to the Family Court regarding placement or diversion based on the youth's needs and circumstances. They are also involved with the County Youth Services Commissions in planning for, implementing, and monitoring the programs developed with funds counties receive from various funding sources, playing a key role in the development of new programs that benefit youth across the State.

Compliance Monitoring

The Compliance Monitoring Unit is responsible for monitoring the 17 county juvenile detention centers' compliance with the Manual of Standards for Juvenile Detention Facilities. The centers are temporary holding facilities for juveniles accused of delinquent acts, with capacities ranging from 15 in Gloucester County to 242 in Essex County. The Unit carries out its responsibility by conducting programmatic evaluations and physical facility inspections. The Unit also approves all new construction and renovation projects, responds to problems and investigates major incidents, conducts suicide prevention inspections, and provides technical assistance to detention personnel regarding physical plant, security, and operational issues.

■ Juvenile Detention Information System

In addition, the Unit spearheads several initiatives designed to improve statewide detention operations. In partnership with the New Jersey Juvenile Detention Association and the JJC's Information Technology Unit, the Unit is involved in the creation of a new web-based Juvenile Detention Information System (JDIS). This system will support the daily operations of the detention centers and will allow detention administrators to share information statewide.

■ Accreditation

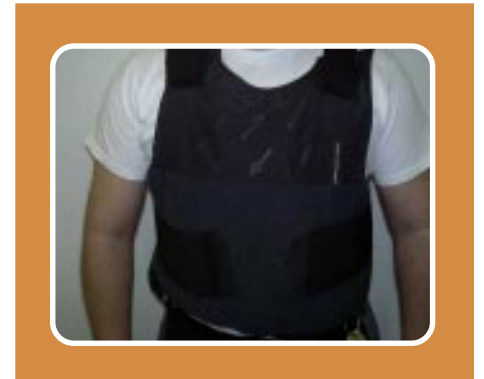
Additionally, the Unit has initiated a medical accreditation effort, with eight detention facilities currently preparing for accreditation by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care. The courts have accepted this accreditation as the benchmark for health care within secure juvenile and adult facilities.

■ Suicide Prevention

Finally, in addition to conducting suicide prevention inspections in detention centers, the Unit emphasizes suicide prevention in other ways. The Unit has trained staff at each facility to serve as Suicide Prevention Coordinators, and has produced a suicide prevention video entitled "How Safe Is Your Facility?" which has been distributed to each detention center as a training tool for staff.

Grants Management

The Grants Management Unit is responsible for seeking and procuring additional grant funds to support programs and services that address the needs of juveniles in the care and custody of the JJC. The Unit has managed more than \$19 million in federal funding which enables the JJC to develop and implement diverse programs and services. It is responsible for the monitoring and reporting requirements of each grant program.



■ Bulletproof Vests

Through the efforts of the Grants Management Unit, the JJC has been able to continue an important goal – the purchase of bulletproof vests for Corrections Officers. To date, the JJC has purchased almost 300 vests that protect its officers from injury at secure facilities. While violence does not occur often, it is critical that officers are prepared for any situation. These vests ensure that our officers are protected from injury to the best of our ability.

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Office of Local Programs and Services

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■ AmeriCorps

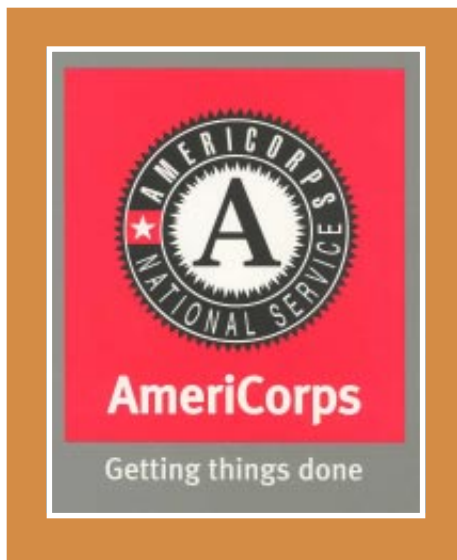
The AmeriCorps Junior Mentor Program provides 20 youth a year, who have successfully completed a JJC program, the opportunity to become Junior Mentors. The Junior Mentors provide peer mentoring to at-risk youth, or to youth in the JJC's care. The youth receive a stipend, assistance with living expenses such as child support, and an educational award while providing a service to other juveniles who can learn from their successes and experiences. Now in its sixth year, 120 JJC residents have participated in the AmeriCorps Program.

■ Substance Abuse

Other specialized initiatives include the Alpha Meta and DOVES substance abuse treatment programs, both funded by the Department of Justice Residential Substance Abuse Grant. Alpha Meta, funded since 1997, provides treatment to 52 male residents at the New Jersey Training School, and DOVES, funded since 2000, is a community-based treatment program for 12 females. Both programs use the New Freedom curriculum, which works to address the problems underlying each resident's substance abuse and to produce cognitive and behavioral changes in each youth.

Research and Evaluation

The purpose of the JJC's Research & Evaluation Unit is to contribute to JJC policy and program development through research, evaluation, and other activities. The Unit regularly reports on various trends affecting different JJC operational areas and the juvenile justice system as a whole, including juvenile arrests, commitments, intakes, and average daily population of JJC facilities. This information is provided in monthly, quarterly, and annual reports, and specific topics are now the focus of a new newsletter titled "Juvenile Justice Matters" to be distributed quarterly.



■ PACT

The Unit also evaluates the performance and impact of various JJC initiatives, with the goal of contributing to the further development and enhancement of JJC programs and services. The Unit recently provided some preliminary feedback to Parents Anonymous on the impact of Parents and Adolescents Changing Together (PACT), a family intervention program operating in certain JJC community programs. The research found, for example, that of the group of parents completing PACT, more than three-quarters reported the program was very helpful in improving a range of family issues, including communicating with their child and their overall relationship with their child. On average, parents reported feeling more "positive," and less "scared," "worried," or "concerned" about their child returning home. Parents and youth are being tracked to allow for an examination of more long-term gains.

■ State Incentive Program

The Unit is also responsible for evaluation of the State Incentive Program, preparing reports that examine SIP's impact on the juvenile justice system in participating counties and statewide, and the impact of SIP on youth served through the program. These statistics are shared with the counties so that changes can be implemented to improve each program's success.

■ Classification

Additionally, the Unit worked collaboratively with the JJC Office of Operations/Classification Unit to develop and implement an objectively-based classification system. This system promotes consistency in classification decision making by using standardized classification instruments and procedures. The Unit is responsible for monitoring the classification process, and does so by preparing Classification Monitoring Reports. These reports help ensure that each youth in custody of the JJC is placed in the most appropriate facility and that he or she receives appropriate treatment.

■ CIA/CAP

A final example points to the Unit's role in the development of new JJC programs. The Unit has spearheaded the development and implementation of the Comprehensive Informational Assessment & Case Action Plan system (CIA/CAP). Through the CIA/CAP, the JJC will enhance its ability to identify and plan for the service needs of youth. The JIMS-based assessment component of the CIA/CAP, which provides a structured means for collecting and streamlining information regarding each youth and for using that information to assess and prioritize each youth's needs, has been implemented at both Juvenile Female Secure Care and Intake Facility/Hayes Unit and Juvenile Reception and Assessment Center (JRAC). ♦

In the Next Edition >>>

**The Office of Juvenile Parole
and Transitional Services**